

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to resolve an issue raised by the Examiner. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 2 and 3, and claims 2 and 3 have been canceled accordingly. Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to change their dependency from canceled claim 2 to claim 1.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested.

Priority

On the Office Action Summary, the Examiner has neither acknowledged Applicants' claim for priority nor indicated that a copy of the certified copy of the priority document has been received from the International Bureau.

Since priority was claimed when the application was filed, and since the Notice of Acceptance indicates that a copy of the certified copy of the priority document has been received from the International Bureau, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge Applicants' claim for priority and indicate that a copy of the certified copy of the priority document has been received from the International Bureau in the next communication from the PTO.

Objection to the Specification

On page 2 of the Office Action, in paragraph 1, the Examiner has objected to the disclosure because on line 5 in the second paragraph on page 7 of the specification, Applicants recite "wal/l", where it may have been intended to be "wall".

In response, Applicants note that the issue raised by the Examiner appears to have resulted from an inadvertent mark which occurred when the specification was photocopied. To

resolve this issue, Applicants have amended the specification as indicated by the Examiner, and thus withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejections

On page 3 of the Office Action, in paragraph 5, claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuoka Shinichi et al. (JP08-141386, JP'386) in view of Tatani Atsushi et al. (JP11128612, JP'612). Also, on page 4 of the Office Action, in paragraph 11, claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuoka Shinichi et al. (JP08-141386, JP'386) in view of Tatani Atsushi et al. (JP11128612, JP'612) as applied to claims 1-2 and 6-8; and further in view of Katzschmann et al. (US3594414, US'414).

In response, Applicants submit initially that JP'386 teaches a method of removing slurry to prevent pump operation from hindrance caused by allowing peeled-off matter to flow into a slurry removing pipe by a method wherein the slurry removing pipe is provided at the bottom of a stirring tank holding slurry in such a manner that its inner opening end projects upward from the tank bottom.

In JP'386, because the peeled-off matter in the slurry is large and thus has difficulty coming up in the stirring tank, to solve the problem, the inner opening end of the removing pipe projects upward from the tank bottom and is set at a height up from the bottom of the stirring tank to prevent the peeled-off matter from coming into the removing pipe.

However, the hindering materials which are present when extracting the slurry in the present invention and in the invention of JP'386 are different from each other.

In contrast to JP'386, a feature of the presently amended invention is that a normal line direction of a surface of the open end of the slurry extraction tube is in a direction of an angle

with respect to a downstream direction of a flow of the slurry of 0° or and less than 90°. Such an arrangement prevents the solid content in the slurry precipitate from accumulating at the open end of the slurry extraction tube, because of the agitation effect of the local eddy current (see page 8, line 18 to page 9, line 24 in the specification, as well as Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

Thus, Applicants submit that JP'386 does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the present invention.

Further, Applicants submit that JP'612 discloses a simple draining device by which only liquid contents in a slurry in a tank can be drawn off.

In contrast, the present invention is directed to a method for extracting slurry in which the content of solid matter is even (the slurry in the description of the present invention does not mean a homogeneous composition or clear solution).

Thus, Applicants submit that JP'612 does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the present invention.

Further, it is submitted that US'414 does not make up for the deficiencies of JP'386 and JP'612 discussed above.

As a result, Applicants submit that the combination of JP'386 in view of JP'612 and the combination of JP '386 in view of JP'612 and further in view of US'414 do not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the present invention, and thus withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

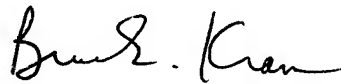
Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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